

Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development**Grants to Municipalities (AS 37.05.315)****Grant Recipient: Kotzebue****Project Title:**

Kotzebue - Regional Cultural Center

State Funding Requested: \$ 250,000**House District: 40 - T**

One-Time Need

Brief Project Description:

Kotzebue is requesting an appropriation to construct an outside area for regional and community events. The new site will be large enough to accomodate large gatherings such as the ICC conference and the Eskimo Trade Fair and other events.

Funding Plan:**Total Cost of Project: \$1,500,000**

	<u>Funding Secured</u>		<u>Other Pending Requests</u>		<u>Anticipated Future Need</u>	
	<i>Amount</i>	<i>FY</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>FY</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>FY</i>
State Funds	\$250,000	2008				
Other	\$400,000	2007				
Total	\$650,000					

Explanation of Other Funds:

The City of Kotzebue is donating the land valued at approx. \$400,000. Additional funding is being requested from federal agencies, private foundations, and other entities.

Detailed Project Description and Justification:

The City of Kotzebue is in need of a recreation site for regional, community and public events. A dedicated cultural recreation center will help to preserve the Inupiaq culture and provide an appropriate site for many community events. The new site will be adequate for accomodating large gatherings such as the Inuit Circumpolar Conference and the International Eskimo Trade Fair. Both of these events draw people from around the world exhibiting international competitions, native cultural games and demonstrations. The site will include an area for cultural ceremonies and community events, picnic areas, shelter and seating, a stage or platfrom for performances and competitions, and interpetive and informational signage about the history of the Inupiaq. The area that is currently being used for community events is inadequate in size and facilities. A new recreation site would fill a real regional community need and would be utilized for many different events throughout the year. Additionally, the current site will no longer be available since it is being developed by the owners. The events that will be held at the recreation site will provide a healthy choice of alternatives for the community and its youth. The Northern Region has one of the highest rates of suicide and the area is making a concentrated effort to combat the suicide rate by making healthy alternatives available for the youth.

Project Timeline:

The money would be expended within the fiscal year.

Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:

City of Kotzebue

Grant Recipient Contact Information:

Contact Name: Rich Walker, City Manager

Phone Number: 442-3401

Address: Box 49 Kotzebue, AK. 99752

Email:

Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Multi-Use Cultural Fairgrounds - \$1.5M

For years the City of Kotzebue and residents have banded together to make its 4th of July Independence Day a memorial occasion. Kotzebue also plays host to the Inuit Circumpolar Conferences and the International Eskimo Trade Fair. Both the ICC and Eskimo Trade Fair draw people from many nations throughout the world, as well as Kotzebue's neighboring native Eskimo communities, drawing international competitions, native and cultural games and demonstrations. The community believes this reflects well on our Country as well as the State of Alaska.

Kotzebue has become congested in recent years, limiting available land for public recreation and cultural activities. A community fairground has been identified at the edge of town. Upon exploration for the development of the property, permafrost was encountered less than a foot beneath the surface. Fill will have to be added and this can be obtained from the adjacent small boat harbor project whereby dredged materials from the small boat harbor project can be used to develop this new area.

Creation of a new site is the only remaining option to provide an area for public cultural activities. The City's Comprehensive plan identifies the need for a cultural "setting" area. The Inupiaq Culture is changing and adapting to a cash economy and newer technologies, such as TV, internet, computers, and many other luxury amenities. A dedicated Cultural Fairgrounds will help to preserve the Inupiaq Culture of past history and present day. The new site will be adequate for accommodating large gatherings such as the ICC conference and the Eskimo Trade Fair, cultural ceremonies and community events, and will include features such as picnic areas, shelter and seating, interpretive and informational signage of the history of the Inupiaq people, a stage or platform area where Inupiaq and Eskimo dance performances can be held, as well as modern recreational features such as basketball courts and softball fields. This project will benefit by using dredged material from the Small Boat Harbor Project as a fill for the Multi-Use Cultural area which is proposed to be located on the Eastern Shore of Swan Lake near Ted Stevens Way.

Community Facilities- \$6.50M

Regional Swimming Pool - \$6.0M

Kotzebue has inadequate adult and youth recreational facilities. Because of Kotzebue's location, north of the Arctic Circle, it is subject to long, cold winter nights which promote boredom among the youth within the community who may have limited structure in their lives or are without access to this means of entertainment to occupy their time productively. The City has been advised of recent statistics showing that Alaska Natives have the highest per-capita rate of teen suicide in the nation. A municipal swimming pool can be seen as an alcohol, drug and suicide preventive measure by replacing idle time with the opportunity for quality social experiences. Due to its location at the mouth of three large rivers which front Kotzebue Sound, it is important that the residents learn to swim or improve upon basic swimming, water safety and survival skills. Drowning accidents and death have occurred in the community in the past.

Residents favor a swimming pool facility particularly for the youth. This new facility will allow the youth to avail themselves to more healthful activities during after school hours. The construction of such a facility will serve residents of Kotzebue and the Borough, the School District and Chukchi College. Additionally, the swimming pool will serve other purposes, one of which is a fire suppression system for two very large adjoining complexes, the Kotzebue Family Entertainment Center and the Kotzebue public schools system. Other uses for this facility may include hosting competitive regional high school swimming meets and life safety and instruction for people of all ages.